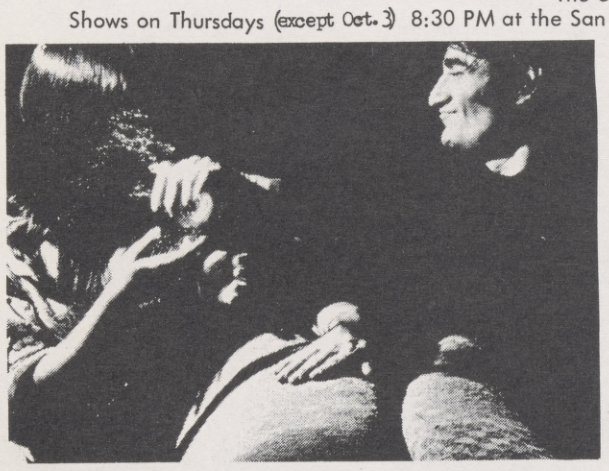
CANYON CINEMATHEQUE '75

The only regular Bay Area showcase for personal and avant-garde films

Shows on Thursdays (except Oct. 3) 8:30 PM at the San Francisco Art Institute, 800 Chestnut St., San Francisco. Admission $1.75. Free coffee. For information call 332-1514.



Ainslie Pryor in THE DEVIL'S CLEAVAGE by George Kuchar

OCT. 16: "THE DEVIL'S CLEAVAGE" by GEORGE KUCHAR

3 KUCHAR WORLD PREMIERES

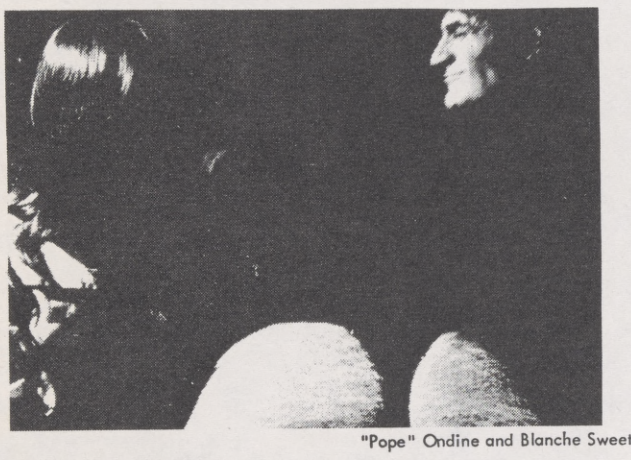
WITH GEORGE KUCHAR IN PERSON

"This is my latest picture and it was pretty late in getting out because I've been sort of busy lately working in and out of the classroom and in and out of the gutter. It's a black and white film and I wanted to make a really big picture...a mammoth drama of people in a jam. It took two years to make and got kind of constipated at times but I finally squeezed it out when I realized I had a feature film on my hands. The longest film I had previously made was 70 minutes...(UNSTRAP ME). It was rightfully labeled as flabby which is a word that wouldn't fit THE DEVIL'S CLEAVAGE. Bloated would be a more suitable adjective for this film. To create a bloated fresco of people in emotional trouble sort of excited me but of course it was very exhausting since I wound up bloated and exhausted after the thing was finished.

"The film is in 3 chapters and should be viewed in its entirety in order to feel the full oppressive effect of the mashing weight of the content. Chapter 1 is sort of a rapid paced overture to the main body of the work... Chapter 2 is the longest chapter and sort of begins like a completely new movie but it's important not to panic so far as understanding the plot since it gradually reveals and unravels itself in time. New characters are introduced and the main star Ainslie Pryor meets the other main star Curt McDowell and several other major characters come in like Virginia Giritlian and John Thomas. One of the main stars of chapter 1, Kathleen Hohalek, does not survive the full three chapters and someone that should not have survived does in order that chapter 3 could reach an emotional, if abrupt, ending. Chapter 3 itself is short and attempts to answer the many questions that are bound to come to the surface after the first two chapters. I myself will be present to answer questions and sit through the entire length of this movie." --George Kuchar (1975) 90 minutes

Also: DIDGERIDOO (Mike Kuchar) 6 minutes. 1972

THE CARNAL BIPEDS (George Kuchar) 20 minutes. 1975



"Pope" Ondine and Blanche Sweet in Andy Warhol's THE CHELSEA GIRLS

VINYL by Andy Warhol

The fact that these films haven't been available since the sixties is reason enough to come to see them; but the fact that Robert "Ondine" Olivio, the notorious and witty star of VINYL, THE LOVES OF ONDINE, and THE CHELSEA GIRLS, will be on hand to recount those days of "speed and spaghetti" -- life among the "superstars" -- makes this an event not to be missed.

OCT. 2: "VINYL" and "THE LOVES OF ONDINE" by ANDY WARHOL

WITH ONDINE IN PERSON Special price $2.50

In a recent interview for the Chicago Sun-Times, recalling his first meeting with Warhol, Ondine said, "New York was a playground (in 1961). Kennedy had just been elected, and everybody was off the wall -- especially the New York avant-garde. I had him (Warhol) thrown out of a party. If there's one thing I hate, it's a voyeur. I mean, if there's going to be an orgy, you should either get involved or get out. This party was developing into a great orgy. But I kept seeing this little gray figure in the corner, just watching everything. So I told the host to throw him out. It was Andy Warhol, of course. And after that, he was absolutely fascinated with me....

"I was on speed for 12 years -- shooting it for maybe five. The whole Factory ran on speed. Warhol may not have been shooting it, but he took four or five Obetrols a day. Speed was the thing that kept you as mad as you were supposed to be."

In THE CHELSEA GIRLS Ondine, high on speed, receives a young confessor. "I warned her, 'When you come to me, be reverent.' Instead, she says to me, in this very actressy voice, 'You're a pho-o-ony.' I mean, who needs Blanche Sweet? So I threw a Coca-Cola in her face. It was a performance that went beyond performance. My dear, I WAS the Pope. And this creature had questioned my authority. There was nothing else to do. I had to beat her to smithereens....

"Success is what killed the Factory. It was no longer a slapdash life; no more big spaghetti dinner in the sky with Andy Warhol feeding the world pasta."

VINYL (1965) 70 minutes

Scenario by Ronald Tavel. Starring Gerard Malanga, Edie Sedgwick, Ondine, and others. "As a contribution to the cinematic vocabulary, the film's interest is its changes between an erotically drenched stillness and frenetic movement. And then back to stillness. And one cannot see the film without being struck by the way Malanga's bondage in that chair seems a message about that stillness. Within the realm of its formal structure, the stillness in VINYL has the same motive as does bondage in ethics. It is a consequence of guilt.

"That is the secret fascination of VINYL and its language, the reason for its place among the most interesting films made within the celebrated vocabulary of sadomasochism. Warhol's filmic language in VINYL involves itself in the horrors that underlie the frenzied grace and frozen hysteria of the 1960's." -- Stepen Koch, Stargazer -- Andy Warhol's World and His Films

THE LOVES OF ONDINE (1967) 86 minutes

Starring Ondine, Viva, Joe Dallesandro, Angelina "Pepper" Davis, Brigid Polk, Ivy Nicholson, and others. This was the first Warhol film Paul Morrissey helped write, and also the screen debut of "Viva Superstar." She and Ondine (in his last Warhol film role) are in top shape for this one as they play off each other in a hilarious comedy routine centered around the fact that Viva has band-aids placed on her nipples. As the title suggests, Ondine goes from one sexual situation to another, and the film ends in a scene that contains an enormous amount of food and naked men.

FRIDAY OCT. 3: ANDY WARHOL'S "THE CHELSEA GIRLS" (1966) 3 hours 15 minutes

WITH ONDINE IN PERSON

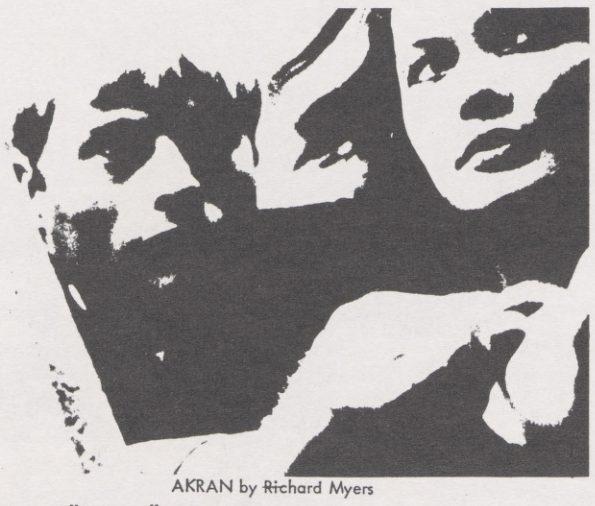
LARGE DOUBLE SCREEN Special price $3.00

"What is CHELSEA GIRLS? It is an epic movie-novel. During the three and a quarter hours that the movie lasts a huge gallery of people pass by, a gallery of complex lives, faces, fates. The film is conceived as a series of rooms at the Chelsea Hotel, two rooms projected side by side at the same time, with different people in different rooms or sometimes, overlapping. Many strange lives open before our eyes, some of them enacted, some real--but always very real, even when they are fake--since this is the Chelsea Hotel of our fantasy, of our mind. Lovers, dope addicts, pretenders, homosexuals, lesbians, and heterosexuals, sad fragile girls, and tough hard girls....It's there in black and white before our eyes, this collection of desperate creatures, the desperate part of our being, the avant-garde of our being. And one of the amazing things about this film is that the people in it are not really actors, or if they are acting, their acting becomes unimportant, it becomes part of their personalities, and there they are, totally real, with their transformed, intensified selves. The screen acting is expanded by an ambiguity between real and unreal. This is part of Warhol's filming technique. There is the girl who walks from scene to scene crying, real tears, really hurt; a girl, under LSD probably, who isn't even aware, or only half aware that she is being filmed; the 'priest' who goes into a fit of rage (a real rage) and slaps the girl right and left (a real slap, not the actor's slap) when she begins to talk about God--in probably the most religious sequence ever filmed. Toward the end, the film bursts into color--not the usual color-movie color but a dramatized, exalted, screaming red color of terror." --Jonas Mekas, The Village Voice

"Warhol's story unfolds on two separate frames, shown simultaneously to give the audience a voyeur's viewpoint. Homosexuals, lesbians, addicts, pushers and debutantes cavort in and around the story line. It is all terribly exotic and fun to watch. There is real nudity, genuine violence and pure amphetamine injected into pure arms. The performers, all perfectly aware they are being filmed, speak directly to the camera--sometimes to Warhol himself--but so inobtrusive is the technique that what begins as an elaborate act ends as stark reality. The horror of our time is in miniature, and this film is a very short peek at a very small hell, in private cubicles."

"CHELSEA GIRLS contains a purity to be found in no other Warhol film. It is either dead serious, or the most involved put-on since Orson Welles roamed the airways. The amphetamine freak-outs and the visions of utter apathy are terrifying to watch. The color in the LSD sequence is more like a multi-media experience than a film..."

--Richard Goldstein, N.Y. World Journal Tribune



AKRAN by Richard Myers

OCT. 9: "AKRAN" by RICHARD MYERS

WITH RICHARD MYERS IN PERSON

Myers, whose film 37-73 was a big hit in this year's Ann Arbor Film Festival Tour, will present his previously released AKRAN and discuss his own approach to film-making. AKRAN tells of a personal drama through a mosaic of thousands of selected memories, moments, and sense impressions. It reveals the inherent beauty and meaning of each moment in life and its relationship to a larger drama within. The protagonist's fears, desires, erotic fantasies and guilts, nostalgia, and his final confrontation with present-day reality in America creates a film powerful for its honesty as well as its visual beauty.

"AKRAN, in just under two hours of tense and poetic imagery, attempts nothing less than a macrocosm of youth today, living in the shadows of a world that has known no peace since they were born. It is a fascinating and penetrating film, and introduces Myers as one of the most original and creative independent talents around today."

-- Arthur Knight, The Hollywood Reporter 105 minutes (1969)

Julius Orlovsky in ME AND MY BROTHER by Robert Frank

OCT. 23: "ME AND MY BROTHER" by ROBERT FRANK

Before making films, Robert Frank was a highly respected photographer, with such books as THE AMERICANS and THE LINES OF MY HAND to his credit. Films he has made include PULL MY DAISY, THE SIN OF JESUS, O.K. END HERE, CONVERSATIONS IN VERMONT, and COCKSUCKER'S BLUES, the unreleased documentary about the Rolling Stones' 1972 tour.

"ME AND MY BROTHER is an incredibly powerful study of alienation taking the form of schizophrenia. The study is of Julius Orlovsky, who lives and travels with his brother Peter and Allen Ginsberg. Julius is a catatonic, a silent man who seldom reacts with visible emotions to outside stimuli. Nonetheless his expressions and silent gestures, the way he stares at the world, could be textbook illustrations for R.D. Laing's radial thesis. In some scenes Julius is played by actor Joseph Chaiken: these sequences, well-written as psycho-drama by Robert Frank and Sam Sheppard, are intercut with virtuoso skill into the equally unnerving narrative of the real Julius' activities. Finally Julius cracks and becomes semi-coherent. After what has been dramatized and and documented beforehand, the effect of his painfully enunciated statements, with their flashes of profound truth, is truly harrowing." -- New Yorker Films (1965-68) 90 minutes

OCT. 30: THE FILMS OF MORGAN FISHER

WITH MORGAN FISHER IN PERSON

At the 1973 International Film Festival in London, Jonas Mekas wrote of Fisher's films, "Very clean, very perfect, very involved in process, and like all good works, very simple looking. He is one of the most interesting figures in the younger wing of the American avant-garde."

Perhaps the most articulate description of what happens in Fisher's films comes from Fisher himself: "My films tend to be about the making of films. I didn't programmatically set out to do this, it's just something that I can't seem to resist. The more deeply I delve into it, the more inexhaustibly rich the subject becomes. The process by which motion pictures are produced is distressingly complex, and every aspect of it is to me fraught with suggestion, though of a seemingly bathetic sort. So my films incline to the literal and matter-of-fact. In a sense they are educational in that they explain procedures or apparatus underlying film production that an audience might not be familiar with. My feeling is that it is important for an audience to understand how it is that a film comes into being, where it comes from, so to speak, and what it must have undergone (in the material sense) before it appears before their eyes as shadows on the screen. People should know that these phantasms are the upshot of a ponderous and refractory art. If they are not aware of it they are denied the chance to understand film as such.

"Actually, it has always puzzled me that my films were not done long ago. Once one starts to reflect on film they are for the most part obvious ideas, though nonetheless elegant. From the beginning there has been a reflexive strain in cinema, but it has always struck me as half-hearted, Vertov and HELL ZAPOPPIN notwithstanding. Film should have taken the plunge at the outset and begun by looking at itself, a pursuit as worthy as the treatment of 'subjects.' Hence my films represent an effort to catch up, to redress an oversight committed by history."

DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE (1968) 11 minutes
PRODUCTION STILLS (1970) 11 minutes
PRODUCTION FOOTAGE (1971) 10 minutes.
PICTURE AND SOUND RUSHES (1973) 11 minutes
THE WILKENSON HOUSEHOLD FIRE ALARM (1973) 2 minutes
240x (1974) 16 minutes
CUE ROLLS (1974) 5 1/2 minutes
PHI PHENOMENON (1968) 11 minutes

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